



2023 TIDE ANNUAL REPORT

LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR



It is a great pleasure to be providing the Letter from the Director for TIDE 2023 Annual Report. The year 2023 can be considered a year in transition at TIDE, starting with my taking of office as the Executive Director effective March 01, 2023, from the former Executive Director, Miss Celia Mahung. Miss Mahung, a stalwart at TIDE for the past 16 years provided extraordinary leadership, commitment and dedication to conservation and exceptional guidance in achieving TIDE's mission. We say thank you and best wishes in your future endeavors.

Another important transition was TIDE deploying its first team of Marine Rangers at Hunting Caye Ranger Station in the Sapodilla Caye Marine Reserve (SCMR) on March 02, 2023. The Marine Rangers are an integral part of the conservation work we do at TIDE as they have the responsibility to protect and manage

the natural resources found within the SCMR for the benefit of present and future generations. Many stakeholders in the surrounding communities rely on these marine resources to generate their livelihoods and their needs must be addressed while protecting the resources.

In contrast to this joyful moment, 2023 was marked with a tearful moment in the TIDE family, as we lost one of our beloved and cared for Park Ranger, Norman Andrew Williams in a freak vehicular accident at Paynes Creek National Park. Andrew was a talented and dedicated park ranger, burn boss and tour guide, who was a member of the TIDE family since 2006. Forever in our hearts Andrew.

An important milestone that was achieved in October 2023, was the signing of the co-management agreement between TIDE and the Belize Fishers Department through the Ministry of Blue Economy and Natural Disaster Management for the management of SCMR. SCMR forms part of the Southern Belize Barrier Reef Complex, one of the 17 barrier reef regions that compose the Mesoamerican Reef System, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Rich in biodiversity and of important economic and environmental value for the people of Toledo, Belize and Mesoamerican Region.

In 2023, TIDE continued its surveillance and enforcement work; and its monitoring and research program in all the protected areas managed, namely Sapodilla Caye Marine Reserve, Port Honduras Marine Reserve, Payne's Creek National Park and TIDE Private Protected Land ensuring the sustainable management of the resources within these protected areas and supporting livelihoods of the people in buffer communities in Toledo.

Asad Magaña
Executive Director

Vision:

Toledo's healthy ecosystems support biodiversity, and communities, whilst contributing to national sustainable development goals

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Mission:

To strengthen natural resource management and community stewardship within the Toledo landscape and seascape



About TIDE

The Toledo Institute for Development and Environment (TIDE) was established in 1997 by concerned community members to combat illegal fishing and illegal harvesting of the West Indian Manatee. TIDE has grown to manage four Protected Areas and employs over 33 full time staff and many community stakeholders.

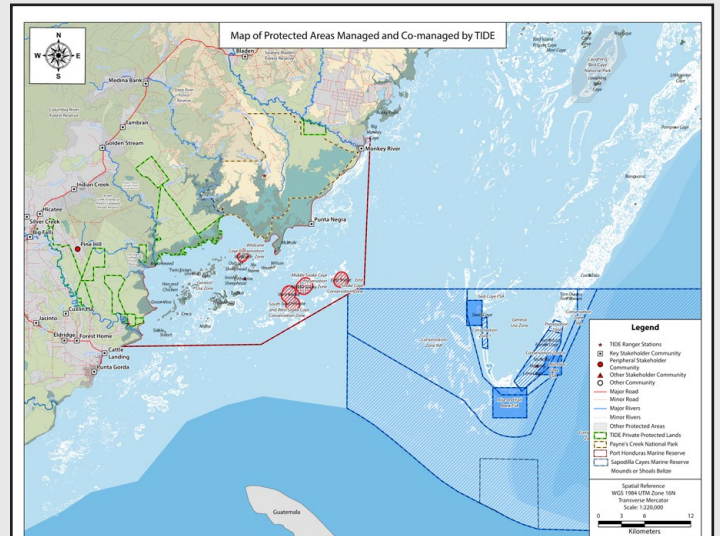
The Toledo Institute for Development and Environment (TIDE) was established in 1997 and has grown from its grass roots as a local, community-based response to manatee poaching and marine degradation, to one of Belize's leading non-government conservation organizations. It is respected nationally and internationally for its landscape/seascape conservation initiatives, its promotion of sustainable resource use and its leadership in fire management.

Based in Punta Gorda (Toledo District), in southern Belize, TIDE has developed an effective, professional operation, with a dedicated board of directors, team of managers and field staff, and has integrated effective and meaningful community partnerships in natural resource management and monitoring activities. TIDE operates with an annual budget of just under Bz\$2 million.

The third strategic plan for the organization, runs for five years, from 2022 to 2026 and builds on TIDE's well-established strategic areas as the organization continues to evolve. It also strengthens the focus on communities and natural resource users as equal partners.

TIDE's Key Strategic Areas for 2022 - 2026 are:

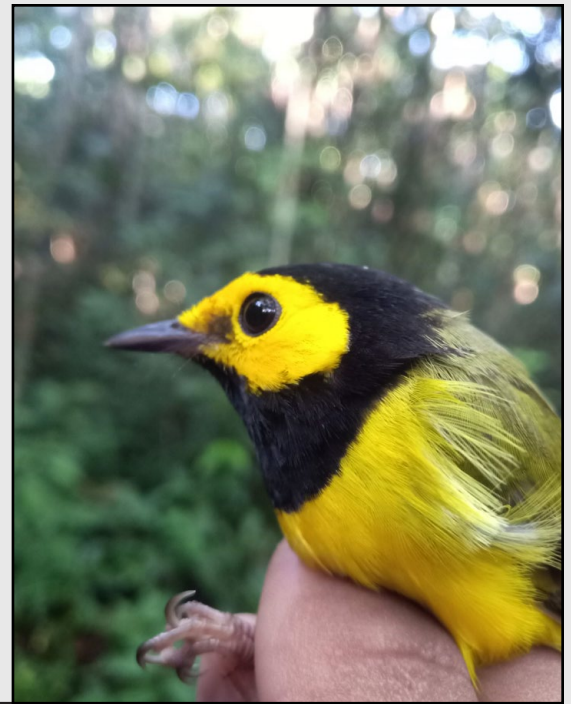
- Natural Resource Management
- Community Stewardship
- Supporting Policy Implementation
- Sharing Successful Models
- Institutional Capacity



The Maya Mountain Marine Corridor is an 830,000 acre ridge-to-reef landscape that connects the Maya Mountains with the coastal waters and coral reefs of the Gulf of Honduras.

TIDE's Role in Toledo

- Effective management of TIDE protected areas, strengthening climate resilience in the Toledo landscape and seascape, and contribute to the development of Belize's National Protected Areas System.
- Adaptive management that is informed by sound environmental monitoring and research, with accurate and credible outputs that inform management and policy.
- Leadership in protected areas and marine resource management, fire management, and community engagement and stewardship, with sharing of successful models.
- Effective engagement of government and non-government partners in relation to protected area management.
- Strengthening and upholding enabling policies and legislation.
- Providing opportunities for community participation in TIDE protected areas towards sustainable natural resource use and management.
- Building capacity of buffer communities for improved stewardship of natural resources and increased climate change resilience.



TIDE'S Scope in Belize

The TIDE ridge-to-reef landscape and seascape is defined by the six watersheds that drain into the Port Honduras Marine Reserve, stretching from the upper elevations of the Maya Mountain in the west to the coast and the coral reefs of the Snake Cayes in the east - and beyond that to the Sapodilla Cayes Marine Reserve, (Managed Access Fishery Areas 4 and 5), linking the watersheds with the sea. Together, the TIDE protected areas form some of the most pristine habitat in the Mesoamerican Biological Corridor, protecting important coral reef, coastal / lagoon ecosystems, tropical forest and pine savanna. The organization manages a portfolio of protected areas in this landscape / seascape, both national and private, that contribute to the National Protected Areas System, and partners with communities and other stakeholders, focusing on the promotion of ecosystem-based management as an important and integral part of social and economic development in southern Belize.

TIDE'S Portfolio of Protected Areas

TIDE manages three national protected areas within the southern Belize landscape: The Sapodilla Cayes Marine Reserve (SCMR) which encompasses 321,623 acres (through a co-management agreement with Fisheries Department). The Port Honduras Marine Reserve (PHMR) which encompasses approximately 100,000 acres (also through a co-management agreement with Fisheries Department) and Payne's Creek National Park (PCNP) covering 37,680 acres (through co-management agreement with the National Biodiversity Office).

TIDE also owns and manages 21,911 acres of private lands within the Toledo landscape – fourteen properties that together make up the TIDE Private Protected Lands (TPPL). All four areas are important components of Belize's southern Biological Corridor and the protected areas landscape and seascape in southern Belize.

In October 2023 The Ministry of Blue Economy and Civil Aviation (MBECA) signed a co-management agreement with TIDE that will allow for the effective management of the Sapodilla Cayes Marine Reserve (SCMR) as well as the PHMR.



2023 Highlights

Payne's Creek Retreat was officially registered as a Belize Tourism Board Registered Accommodation, making it one of the first accommodations within a Protected Area in the South to achieve this status.



A co-management agreement was signed with the Ministry of Blue Economy and Civil Aviation for the co-management of the Sapodilla Cayes Marine Reserve

TIDE received two awards from Protected Areas Conservation Trust (PACT).

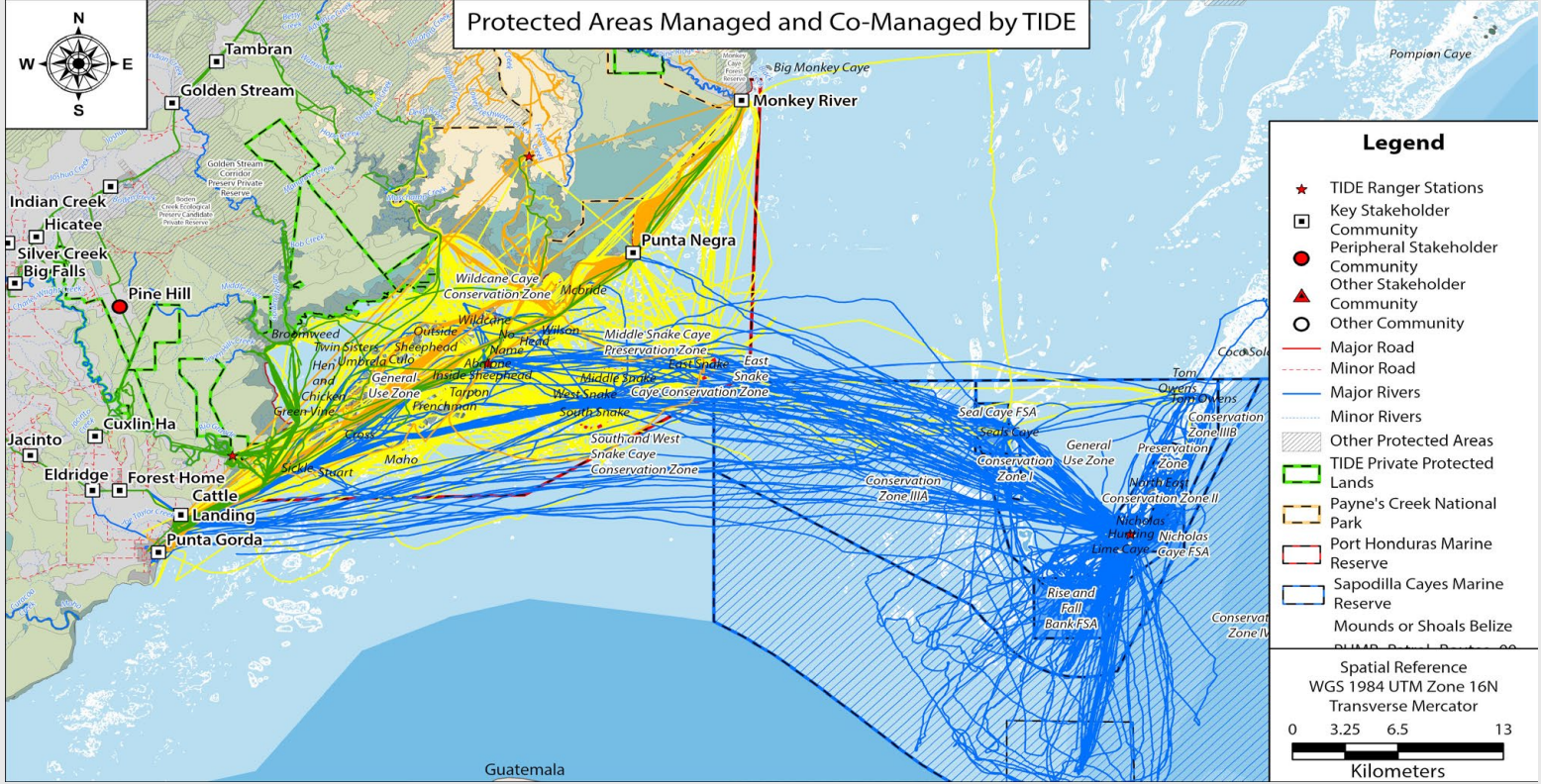
- The Investment Partner of the Year under the Transition Investment Program in recognition of most outstanding performance for the year 2023.
- Covid-19 Recovery Award in recognition of top performance in financial recovery under the CIS for the period 2019-2022.



TIDE Revamped it's Scholarship programme and is now supporting 51 students in following their academic dreams.

Steven Page granted TIDE 14 acres of beachfront property including a building for TIDE to use as ranger station at Punta Ycacos.





Natural Resource Management: Resource Management and Protection

The Natural Resource Management Program focuses on the TIDE protected areas, and on the TIDE ridge-to-reef landscape and seascape, with strategies for holistic conservation of the ecosystems and biodiversity.

Port Honduras Marine Reserve A total of 610 patrols were conducted for the period January 2023 to December 2023.

Number of Patrols by PA

PCNP: 348 Patrols
PHMR: 610 Patrols
TPPL: 502 Patrols
SCMR: 230 Patrols

The patrols in PHMR yielded 4 verbal warnings, 3 gill nets and 1 out of season lobster trap was removed from within the reserve. 3 Individuals were also arrested during a night patrol within the conservation zone around East Snake Caye. The dock, the stairs to the front of the main building, and the wastewater system at Abalone Caye were refurbished.

For 2023, the rangers carried out 348 patrols, spent 788 hours on patrol and travelled a distance of 13,720km. The team also observed 4 fires which they believed were started by hunters which were assessed, and they responded accordingly. There were three wildfires for 2023 in PCNP one in March that burnt some 5000 acres in PCNP and DRFR and the other 2 in May and June in the eastern and southeastern sections of the park respectively impacting some of the herbaceous swamps of the park west of Monkey River and Punta Negra communities

Payne's Creek National Park

TIDE Private Protected Lands Between the 1st of January and the 31st of December 2023, park rangers carried out 502 patrols, both on land (67) and waterways (435). During these patrols, they encountered 35 persons and came across evidence of others. Most individuals were observed along the Rio Grande with only a few who fished in creeks off TPPL lands who were warned and documented

A total of 230 patrols were conducted during the period from March to December 2023. The team gave 4 verbal warnings and confiscated 25 fishing gears within the reserve which comprised mostly of gill nets. In the month of May, the enforcement team identified 12 infractions within Conservation Zone 4 near the Cayman Crown Area which led to the arrest of three individuals.

Sapodilla Cayes Marine Reserve



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Natural Resource Management: Research and Monitoring

Yellow-Headed Parrot Monitoring

YHP Monitoring Summary

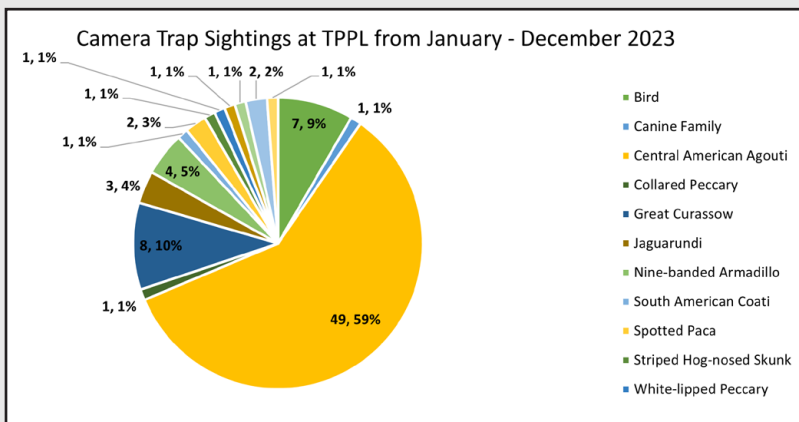
Eggs and Chicks

Total Nest Monitored	29
Total number of eggs	60
Total number of hatched chicks	50
Total number of fledged chicks	16
Total number of extracted chicks	11



The 2023 monitoring season for the yellow-headed parrot (YHP) in Payne’s Creek National Park and the Deep River Forest Reserve (DRFR) included the restoration or replacement of deteriorated nests, initial checks to nests, monitoring of active nests when identified, patrols to deter poaching, extraction of chicks and re-release of the previous year’s chicks.

In total, 29 nests were active for 2023 yielding 60 eggs. 50 chicks successfully hatched with 16 chicks who fledged without intervention and 11 chicks were extracted and sent to the Belize Bird Rescue (BBR) for captive rearing and will return in 2024. Additionally, 6 parrots were re-introduced into the wild population. These were chicks that were extracted during the 2022 breeding season and captively reared at the BBR. These parrots were brought to PCNP and housed in a soft-release enclosure over a few weeks. TIDE staff fed the returned parrots daily and after a few days, the soft-release enclosure was opened to allow the first group to exit and slowly integrate into the wild population in PCNP. Unfortunately, 10 chicks were predated, and 12 chicks were poached but overall, this concluded a successful YHP nesting season for both the PCNP and DRFR.



Camera Trapping

For the monitoring period January 1 – December 31, 2023, there were 61 animals observed on the Dan Campbell Trail. Several species of birds, including male and female great curassow, and an unidentified species. The agouti made up 59% of observations with a few instances of 2 animals in a single capture. Cat species such as the Ocelot was identified, and the Jaguarundi, with one capture having 2 individuals.

PCNP Pilot Site for GCF Readiness Project

In 2023 PCNP was selected for a project between the government of Belize through the Forest Department and the International Savanna Fire Management Initiative (ISFMI). This project aims to conduct baseline scientific assessment, consultations, gap analysis and capacity building to develop a concept note that will lead to self-sustaining fire management projects that reduce wildfires and Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions, protect biodiversity, prevent forest loss and degradation and create opportunities for local communities. In November 2023 the team at PCNP conducted a prescribed burn in PCNP to look at fuel consumption to assist with determining GHG from controlled/prescribed burns (Rx burn) as part of the project.



Sea Turtle Monitoring in PHMR

Sea Turtle Monitoring Summary

Total number of nests	83
Total number of eggs	10,841
Total Number of hatchlings	7,7732
Total number of infertile eggs	2,457

Reintroduced in 2020 was the monitoring of Turtle Nests. This was led in the field by Mario Muschamp and rangers from the PCNP and TPPL teams. They monitored along the Punta Yacos coastline up to Monkey River where they made frequent checks during routine patrols. For the 2023 turtle nesting season, there were ~10,841 eggs laid at 83 nesting sites. Of those ~7,7732 hatchlings emerged successfully or 71.3% of the total. ~2,457 eggs were infertile and ~313 eggs were damaged by roots. 13 nest sites were partially inundated with partial successes. 6 nest sites were completely predated and 1 site was partially predated. 4 of the total sites were predated by grey foxes and 3 sites by racoons.

MoSI Monitoring in TPPL



Between November 2022 and March 2023, the TPPL team along with support from rangers from Payne's Creek National Park conducted monthly MoSI pulses at the monitoring site on the Dan Campbell Trail. This is the third year of operating the station, but this season no monitoring report has been produced. Instead, we hope a two-year report can be produced at the end of the upcoming season, in partnership with UB-ERI, where they plan to build some students' capacity in report writing.

In March, Reymundo Chen assisted in two training sessions at TREES, to further his experience and advance his competency for bird bander certification. During these sessions, two of TIDE's newer rangers attended training sessions to gain additional training exposure. During the last week of September 2023, two rangers attended a five-day training also held at TREES. The latest banding season commenced in November 2023 and continues until March 2024.

Fish Spawning and Aggregation Monitoring

The 2023 spawning aggregation monitoring season extended from months January to May and included December. These efforts targeted

5 FSA sites, with each site being monitored an average 3 times per year. Priority was given to the Cayman Crown site which was monitored a total of 4 times during the spawning aggregation season.

SCMR 2023 monitoring sites:

2 at Cayman Crown

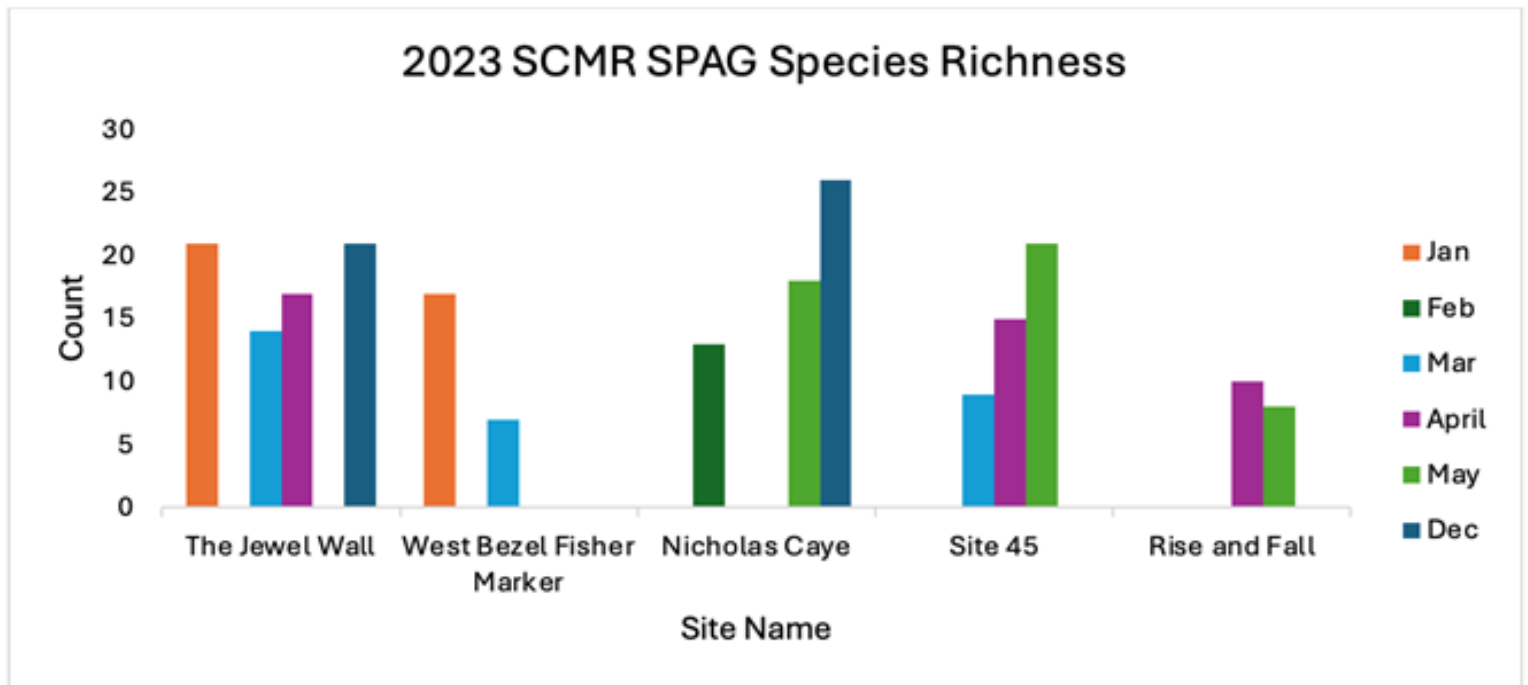
- The Jewel Wall
- West Bezel Fisher Marker

3 historic sites near the Sapodilla Cayes

- Nicholas
- Rise and Fall
- Site 45



Species richness varied from one site to the next throughout the year. Nicholas showed the most variety of fish when monitored in December with a total of 26 different species being recorded during one monitoring event. The Jewel Wall, however, was most diverse averaging 10 species for the season while the others only average between 2 to 8 species.



Overall species richness for 2023 spawning aggregation monitoring at the Sapodilla Cayes Marine Reserve

The site monitored continue to support multispecies aggregations of mainly jacks and snappers and to a lesser extent groupers.

Jacks were most abundant and occurred in the 100's-1000's, producing a total of 7744 fish. Snappers also existed in the 100's-1000's with a total 4037 fish recorded. Groupers were the least abundant of the three, being found by the 100's, with only 1270 total individuals being counted.

The Nassau grouper was predominant grouper species, dominating the 41-50 cm size class, while bar jacks superseded all other jack species with most fish ranging from 11-30 cm. School masters were the most abundant of the snapper species and primarily found in the 21-40 cm size range.

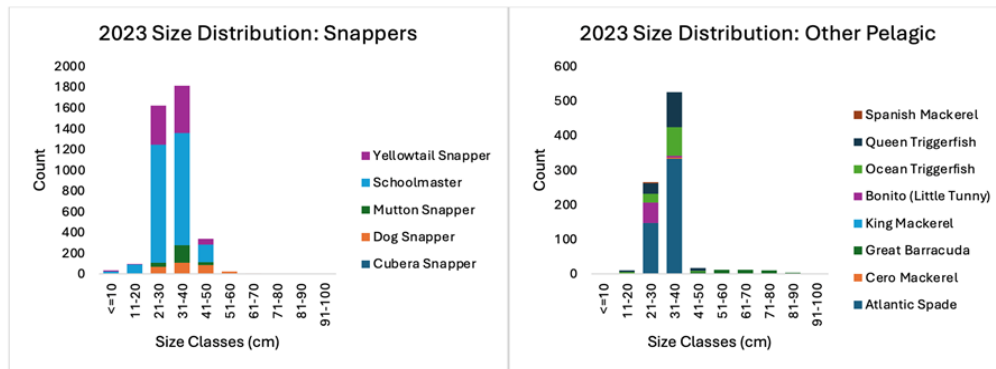
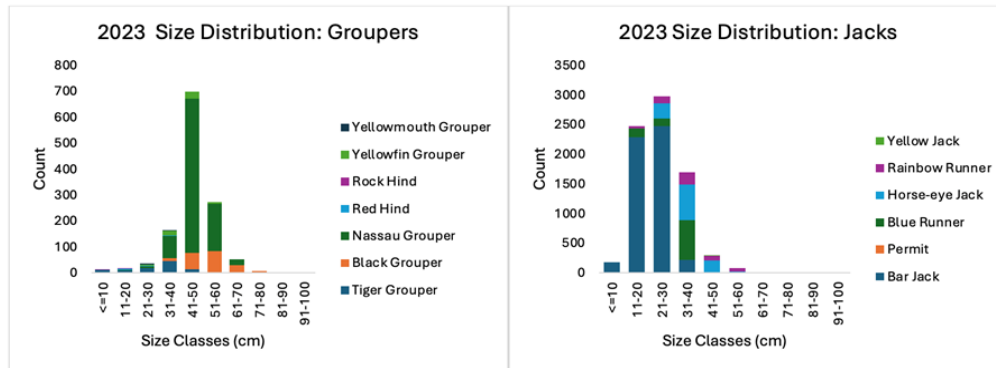
Peak months were different for the different fish categories. As expected, the Nassau grouper numbers peaked in February and December. Similarly, bar jacks peaked during the same months, however numbers remained at about 50% from March to May. Schoolmasters were most plentiful in March and April, with number also rising in December and January.

Spawning behaviour has consistently been observed through the season.

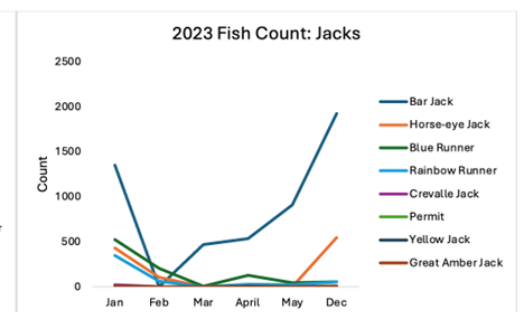
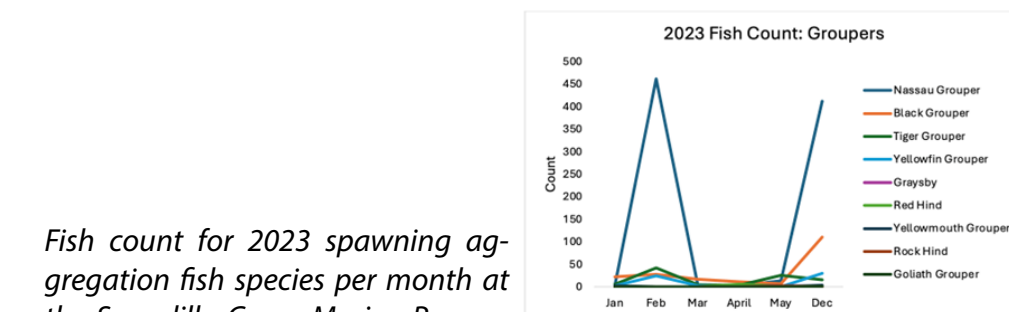
Moderate aggregations displayed colour changes and gravid appearance. This includes the black, nassau and tiger groupers. Large school aggregation engaged in chasing behaviour and some courtship. Those seen were the bar, horse-eye and crevalle jacks.

Trends appear similar to those found at the end of 2022.

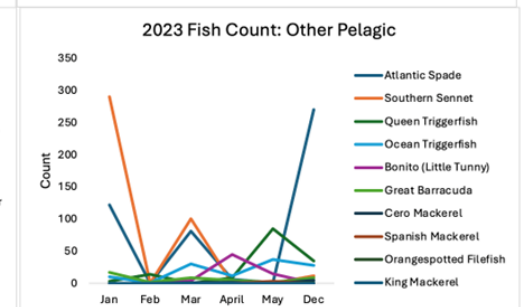
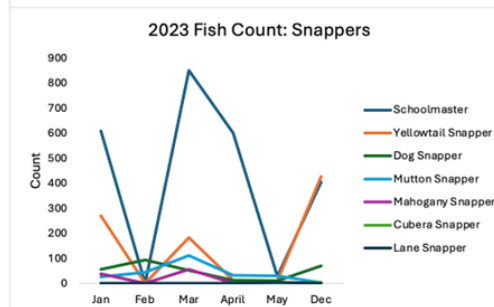
Discrepancies in the numbers may be attributed to the frequency with which sites are visited, as specific sites may be dominated by specific species. The data is otherwise consistent with past years and indicative of known spawning trends.



Overall size distribution for 2023 spawning aggregation fish species at the Sapodilla Cayes Marine Reserve



Fish count for 2023 spawning aggregation fish species per month at the Sapodilla Cayes Marine Reserve (fish list on each graph is listed from most abundant to least from top to bottom)



TIDE



Community Stewardship: Education and Outreach

TIDE's Community Stewardship program has two main components. The first seeks to inform and engage communities through environmental education activities that foster stewardship of natural resources. The second is to actively engage communities and individuals in community development activities that improve natural resource management in the Toledo landscape.

Outreach to Fisherfolks



PHMR stakeholders were reached via one organized boat-to-boat session, phone calls and one on one house visits. Through these sessions, we were able to meet 58 commercial fisherfolk who customarily use the reserve for their livelihood.

The house visits enabled one on one discussions with the fisherfolk and their families and focused on sharing regulations of the area and ways to improve the relationship with PHMR staff. Fisherfolks echoed the respect they receive from rangers and are glad to see rangers patrolling within the area. They hoped for more patrols at night and within the conservation zones of the reserve, but they understand the challenges associated with night patrols.

In April TIDE hosted a fisher forum in Punta Gorda, to give fishers a platform to discuss the fishing zones, rules and regulations concerning Sapodilla Cayes Marine Reserve.

TIDE's Environmental Clubs continue to be TIDE's focus for outreach in communities. These are used as mediums to share TIDE's work which includes topics such as fire management, mangrove, and reef importance. A total of two hundred fifty-three youth from 12 clubs in buffer communities participated in 45 clean-ups, Reef Week, TIDE Summer Camp, club games, 10 exchange visits, mangrove and coral sessions in 2023.

A total of 35 meetings were held throughout the year with all active environmental clubs. Collaboration with other NGOs made further engagement possible for youth in these communities.

Toledo Environmental Clubs



Environmental Clean-ups

Number of Clean-ups	45
Number of Communities Engaged	12
Number of Trash Bags Collected	350

There were 45 organized clean-ups within 12 communities in 2023. This resulted in a total of 350 bags of trash being removed and disposed of properly at the local landfills, whilst a few clubs repurposed some waste in their communities as flowerpots. Most of the waste was removed by the Trio Environmentalist Strikers followed by the Big Falls Eco-Warriors and TIDE's scholarship students and summer camp participants.

Reef Week



Four environmental clubs and six coastal teams were engaged in Reef Week 2023 which focused on the theme **“For Health, Wealth and Pleasure, Our Reef is a Treasure!”** through community clean-ups, talk-shows, and one sporting tournament coordinated with the Toledo Football Association.

A total of 90 females participated in a U13 Soccer tournament which included 3 games for each team and sessions to learn about TIDE's work in Coral and Mangrove Protection. Reef Week activities and outreach sessions engaged the youth for three months on sensitization of mangroves and reefs as barriers to coastal protection. The ambassadors shared information about their clean-up and a field trip held in PHMR using Sunshine Raydio and PGTV, they had five (5) one hour talk shows.

Summer Camp

Number of Children Engaged	99
Number of Facilitators	15
Number of Trash Bags Collected	18

TIDE's Annual Summer Camp of 2023 focused on the theme: **“Uniting Community and Conservation for a Brighter Tomorrow!”**. Four Summer Camps took place in TIDE's buffer communities, with participation from 99 school children aged 10 – 13. Each camp took place over a period of one week, and Toledo Environmental Club leaders facilitated the camps in the communities of Punta Gorda, Eldridge, San Marcos, and Trio Village. A total of 15 facilitators, guided by TIDE's Education and Outreach Coordinator, ensured that all the camps were a great success. In addition to the educational and recreational activities organized, all campsites also participated in community clean-ups, during which a total of 18 bags of trash were removed from the environment and disposed of in their community landfill. TIDE's 2023 Summer Camp was made possible thanks to support from Mass Audubon.



Under the theme **“Uniting Community and Conservation for a Brighter Tomorrow!”** the competition took place during TIDE's annual Conservation Festival in October, and participating classes and groups created 9 informative and interactive displays that showcased the theme. Belize Tourism Industry Association PG, Community Policing Unit and the Nature Conservancy-Raptor research were also present sharing their work in Toledo. During the event, an estimated 600 students and adults visited the booths, which included many students from St. Peter Claver School, Bethel SDA Primary, St. Benedict RC, PG Methodist and third and fourth form students from Julian Cho Technical High School.

Environmental Awareness Day



Community Stewardship: Community Development

Community Researchers

Six Community Researchers graduate from TIDE's year of training. Every year TIDE take on new students from buffer communities and train them in:

- SCUBA diving (PADI Open Water Diver)
- GPS use and basic GIS analysis
- Emergency First Response
- Scientific monitoring and assessment
- Basic environment science, including basic coral reef ecology, land-sea interconnectivity, and the impact of human activities.



PADI SCUBA Training



Rangers at TIDE need to be well trained in a variety of disciplines to carry out the daily demands placed on them.

From installing buoys to retrieving gill nets, the proper use of SCUBA equipment enables some of the more hazardous underwater work to be carried out safely. SCUBA certification is a necessary rite of passage for new rangers at TIDE.

In April 2023, two PHMR rangers - Mark Jacobs and Aaron Garbutt - became PADI Open Water certified thanks to support from MAR Fund, under the project "Strengthening Surveillance and Enforcement in Port Honduras Marine Reserve, Belize."

TIDE Scholarship Program

2023 Summary

Number of Students Supported	52
Number of Females	31
Number of volunteer hours by scholarship students in 2023	3,100

For the new school year 2023-2024, the Education and Outreach Coordinator (Mr. Federico Caal) and Ishiamae Gomez, Receptionist, with the added responsibility of managing the scholarship students had engaged in primary school visits with the aim of recruiting new students to join TIDE's Scholarship Program.

They visited six primary schools to recruit students from 5 target communities namely Cuxlin Ha, San Marcos, Indian Creek, Golden Steam, and Bella Vista. The reason for selecting these communities is that although they have been identified as buffer communities the students had not been benefitting from TIDE's Scholarship Program.

The program for the school year 2023-2024 had 11 students who received tuition scholarships, 8 who received uniforms and 49 students who received book scholarships (18 males and 31 females). Students are enrolled in the following areas of study:

Arts, Agriculture, Business, Hospitality Management, Industrial Technology, Science, and Tourism at six (6) different high schools namely:

Belize Adventist College Corozal, George Town Technical, Independence, Julian Cho Technical, Providence and Toledo Community College.





Financial Sustainability

TIDE's subsidiary TIDE TOURS, the tour operator company, performed amazingly for the 2023 period. Under the leadership of Financial Sustainability Manager, Mr. Oliver Garay, the company conducted 93 day tour activities including 30 EF STEM Tours. Total income for 2023 increased by 24.3%, while expenses were efficiently managed, resulting in a 23.7% increase in net profit compared to the previous year.

Manager's Overview

TIDE Tours, a subsidiary of the Toledo Institute for Development and Environment (TIDE), aims to promote ecotourism in the Toledo District while providing sustainable livelihoods, reducing poverty, and funding conservation efforts.

The company specializes in STEM Tours, offering a diverse range of marine and terrestrial activities to local and international student groups from high schools and universities. Historically, TIDE TOURS created custom STEM programs and tour itineraries tailored to each group's specific needs and interests. To enhance marketing and client engagement, the company now plans to standardize its offerings by developing structured resource guides that highlight its various STEM programs at TIDE's protected areas in Southern Belize.

The STEM program has been receiving excellent reviews from international clients because it offers the perfect blend of three components: STEM, culture, and leisure. These programs stand out as they immerse students in the natural resources of both seascape and landscape, while also exposing them to the diverse cultural groups of Belize. The Toledo district is rich in culture, home to all five major ethnic groups of Belize, providing students

with a unique opportunity to experience this cultural diversity firsthand.

2023 has been the best-performing financial year in the past 10 years of business operations. The STEM programs have flourished significantly, establishing themselves as the cornerstone of TIDE TOURS' future focus, in addition to other innovative tour programs currently in development.



Business Operations

TIDE Tours experienced a highly productive year in 2023, characterized by the successful execution of a wide array of tours and programs. We completed 93-day tour activities, including 30 EF STEM Tours and two pilot tours under the EF All Girls Program. Partnerships were also strengthened with educational institutions such as the University of Alabama, which sent 28 guests for an eight-day immersive tour, and The Nature Conservancy (TNC), for which we provided comprehensive support including accommodation, meals, and transportation for a 12-day program. Additionally, Galen University also engaged interest in our student marine tour program. The variety of our offerings was further enriched by thirteen-day tour packages, comprising six marine tours and eight terrestrial tours.

Financially, TIDE Tours' income sources included day tours, Ridge to Reef Expeditions, charters, gift shop sales, and accommodation income. The Ridge to Reef Expeditions alone saw a 19.4 % increase in revenue. Our total income for 2023 increased by 24.3%, while expenses were efficiently managed, resulting in a 23.7% increase in net profit compared to the previous year. This marked a significant improvement from 2022, reflecting our strong operational performance and strategic financial management.



Economic Impact

Our diverse and extensive range of tours has attracted a substantial number of international visitors, greatly benefiting the local economy. For instance, EF Tours brought 844 international students to Toledo, accompanied by local tour directors and bus operators. Additionally, the University of Alabama program included 27 students. This influx of visitors has spurred increased demand for local services such as lodging, dining, and other hospitality-related businesses.

TIDE TOURS brings international visitors to the area through its tour programs, creating a ripple effect that bolsters the local economy. This surge in foreign exchange benefits freelance tour guides, boat operators, private bus charters, local food vendors, caterers, cultural groups, restaurants, hotels, and various others. A wide spectrum of individuals and community groups directly reap the rewards of these programs.

In 2023, TIDE Tours paid approximately 16.64% of their total income in taxes to the Government of Belize, maintaining their standing status with all services and accommodations registered with the Belize Tourism Board.

Our marketing initiatives have played a crucial role in expanding our reach and engagement. These efforts have included regular updates to our website, active promotion on social media platforms, and the distribution of promotional items. These strategies have significantly heightened our visibility and engagement with potential clients, ensuring a consistent flow of business and economic benefits.

Capacity Building

Capacity building was pivotal to TIDE Tours' strategy in 2023. We initiated multiple programs to boost the skills and knowledge of our staff and the local community. One standout success was the TIDE Hybrid Tour Guide Program, which rigorously trained five new guides in both theoretical knowledge and practical tour guiding techniques, expanding our roster to 13 trained guides since the program's inception.

Throughout the season, we conducted mid-season reviews and additional training sessions to further refine their abilities, ensuring they consistently deliver top-tier service to our guests.

Additionally, we partnered with the University of Belize to host four dedicated interns: Maureen Assi, completing her three-month internship as part of her Bachelor's in Business Administration Degree, and Matthew Sacul, Jianne Flowers, and Rhandy Alegria, who completed intensive three-week internships as part of their Tourism Studies Associate Degrees. These internships provided invaluable hands-on learning experiences, contributing significantly to their professional development while bolstering operational efficiency at TIDE Tours.

TIDE TOURS also focused on investing in specialized training for the manager and tour guides, empowering them to effectively lead educational field trips.



Environmental Impact

At TIDE Tours, we are deeply committed to environmental conservation. In collaboration with the Xucaneb community group in San Pedro Columbia, we actively engage in reforestation riverbanks. In 2023, our efforts led to the planting of 2,433 trees, surpassing the previous year's total of 1,862. This initiative involved 844 international students from EF Tours and 27 students from the University of Alabama, highlighting the importance of environmental stewardship to our visitors.

Looking ahead, we are integrating modern technology into our environmental programs. This includes using GIS mapping and online forms to enhance the tracking and management of our planting efforts. Additionally, our marine program has been bolstered by new technologies such as Avanza Maps and GoPro cameras. These tools not only support our conservation activities but also offer immersive, educational experiences for our guests, allowing them to actively participate in our environmental efforts.

Through these comprehensive initiatives, TIDE Tours aims to not only mitigate its environmental impact but also cultivate a culture of sustainability and conservation within the communities we serve and among our international visitors. These efforts underscore our dedication to preserving the natural beauty and ecological health of Southern Belize, ensuring future generations can continue to cherish and learn from this unique environment.

TIDE Conservation Festival

The TIDE Conservation Festival returned triumphantly in 2023 after a three-year pause due to the pandemic and strict government regulations. The event, themed “Uniting Community and Conservation for a Brighter Tomorrow,” spanned an exciting weekend with three major events that drew significant participation and engagement from the community.

The festivities began on Friday, October 6th, with Environment Education Day at the Toledo Community College Auditorium. Hundreds of students participated in competitive display booths, with categories for both Primary and Secondary School Students & Youth Groups. The event, which included various prizes for the best displays, successfully promoted environmental education, inclusivity, and engagement among the youth.



Later that evening, the iconic TIDE Gala took place at Garbutt’s Marina. This event was considered as an evening of elegance and excellence, catered to adults and community leaders. Attendees enjoyed cultural entertainment, fine dining with seafood dishes from local vendors, and performances by local musicians. Hosted by Mr. Paul Mahung and Miss Earth 2021, Mrs. Destiny Wagner, the gala celebrated conservation, culture, and community, enhancing local cultural appreciation.

The grand finale of the festival was the TIDE Fish Fest on Sunday, October 8th, at the TIDE Compound. This family-oriented event featured a fishing tournament, various games and competitions, a volleyball tournament, and live entertainment throughout the day. Vendor booths offered local food and products, promoting community entrepreneurship and conservation efforts. Hosted by Mr. Paul Mahung and DJ H6IX, the event concluded with an evening concert featuring Sweet Pain Band 2.0 and local DJs, fostering community spirit and providing memorable entertainment for all attendees.

The festival had a positive economic impact on the local economy, attracting out-of-district visitors and international



tourists, which generated income for local businesses during the low tourism season. Looking ahead, TIDE aims to expand the event next year, encouraging more local vendors to participate and increasing marketing efforts to further promote community and conservation initiatives.

In conclusion, the TIDE Conservation Festival 2023 successfully revived an important community tradition, enhancing environmental awareness, cultural appreciation, and economic activity. The dedication of the TIDE staff and community support were pivotal in achieving this success.

Institutional Strengthening



TOLEDO INSTITUTE FOR DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT STRATEGIC PLAN (2022 – 2026)

Through this key strategic area, TIDE will ensure that there is a guiding framework for effective management and that the administration, human resources and capacity are adequate for effective implementation of the Strategic Plan. TIDE will also strengthen the governance framework through ongoing capacity building of the board of directors and advisory councils in leadership of the organization. Finally TIDE will improve on the adaptive management, monitoring and evaluation of projects and program implementation for improved measurement of the impact of TIDE.



Management Effectiveness TIDE conducted a Management Effectiveness Assessment through the support of the IUCN lead KFW project titled, “Linking the Central American Landscape.” In this exercise, numerous stakeholders were identified who contribute directly or indirectly to the management of the PHMR. The overall score attained was 69.1% just a 0.03% reduction from the previous year which is classified as “Good” in the indicator scale.

Through the lifetime of this project, TIDE has set the goal of being listed within the internationally renowned Green List. To achieve this TIDE will be engaging in numerous activities funded through this project targeting weaknesses identified through Management Effectiveness Assessments. Although TIDE has not yet implemented any of these activities, we hope to do so in the second quarter of 2024 through the signing of an MOU with IUCN.



Governance

The TIDE Board is composed of directors drawn from the Belizean Community, elected by the membership based on their merit, local and / or professional skills and experience in the following areas: business management, natural resource management, education, community development, public relations, and finance. The Board also has strong community representation through inclusion of a representative from each of the protected area advisory councils, bringing communities and natural resource users to the table as partners in the decision-making process.

Responsibility of TIDE's Board

The Board of Directors has ultimate responsibility for policy formulation and provides overall direction for the organization. This includes:

1. Safeguarding the vision, integrity, objectives, and policies of TIDE.
2. Ensuring high standards of planning, operation, administration, evaluation and reporting in TIDE.
3. Ensuring that statutory obligations are met.
4. Ensuring that adequate resources are available to TIDE for all aspects of its work and administration.
5. Ensuring that resources provided to TIDE are used for their intended purpose and are properly accounted for.

2023 saw an unprecedented total of nine board meetings. After 14 and 18 years of continued dedicated service to TIDE's Board, Miss Marie Aleman and Mr. Albert Gabriel Roaches retired in December 2023.

Notably in 2023, the Board made a bold decision to invest part of its capital, by way of its endowment fund, in the local bond market with the BTB Bond Offering -Transformation Bond to Institutional & Retail Investors. This investment will improve significantly the income that will be derived from the endowment fund, thus contributing to TIDE financial sustainability.

The Board also approved the upgrading of TIDE's Accounting System to an online based version of the quickbooks software, this will enable improved operational efficiency and reporting capacity by the staff while also improving on the internal controls of the financial system.

Activities Accomplished by the Board of Directors





Overview of TIDE's Advisory Councils

TIDE has two protected area Advisory Councils, linked to their respective protected areas:

1. Port Honduras Marine Reserve Advisory Council (representing stakeholders of PHMR)
2. Payne's Creek National Park Advisory Council (representing stakeholders of PCNP)

Both are composed of representatives from key stakeholder communities and resource user groups and have been established to ensure that stakeholders have meaningful participation in management decisions and that their interests are represented at all levels of management of the protected area. Both Advisory Councils have representation on TIDE's Board of Directors. TIDE also sits on the PHMR Managed Access Committee, comprised of commercial fisherfolk representative organizations and key agencies responsible for the implementation of fisheries management in PHMR.

On April 13, 2023, the meeting was held with attendance from most members except Ms. Eloydia Cuevas from Monkey River Village Council and Mr. German Lopez from the Forest. The highlight of this meeting was the analysis of the Fish market survey data which was collected under the EU project during 2017 – 2020. Katie King-Smith, TIDE Intern, gave a brief summary of the data which culminated her work, which also included market visits to sensitize fishers who participated in the survey. Her work was guided by meetings held with Mr. Roy Polonio who has been interested in this topic for quite some time.

Activities Accomplished by the Advisory Councils

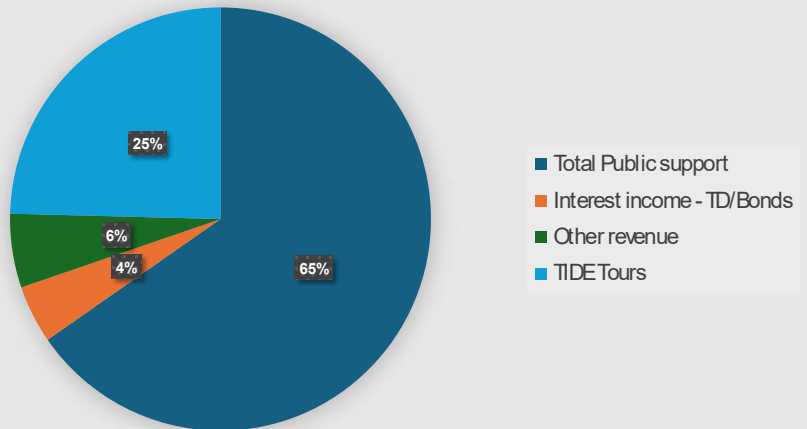


Finances

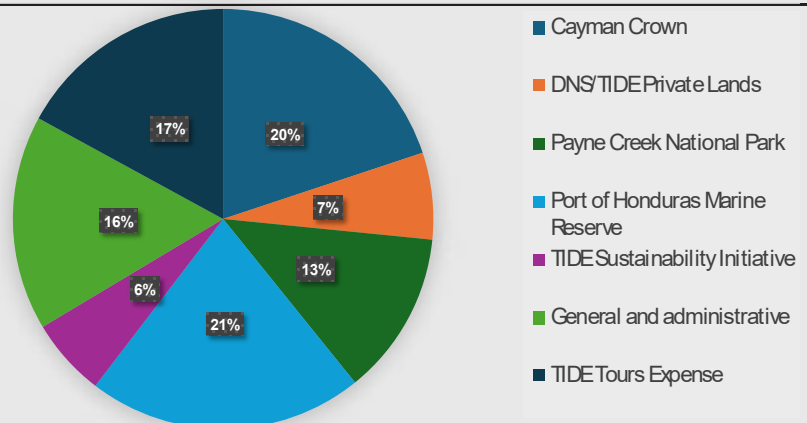
The total public support and revenues for 2023 were USD \$1,010,514.

2023 Expenses were USD\$1,055,306.5 comprised of Port Honduras Marine Reserve (21%), Cayman Crown (20%) Payne’s Creek National Park (13%), TIDE Private Protected Lands (7%),TIDE Sustainability Initiative (6%), TIDE Tours Expense (17%) and General & Administrative (16%).

2023
Income



2023
Expenses



TIDE

ANNUAL REPORT 2023



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